

# Gorbachev warns separatists they risk 'bloodshed, death'



Associated Press

**PIVOTAL:** Gorbachev described in magazine as the 'force behind the most momentous events of the '80s.'

## Soviet president singled out for role in shaping the future

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Mikhail Gorbachev, whose political and economic reforms in the Soviet Union sparked a revolution that shattered communist control of Eastern Europe, was named Man of the Decade by Time magazine yesterday.

The Soviet president, previously named Time's Man of the Year in 1987, was chosen because he is "the force behind the most momentous events of the '80s and because what he has already done will almost certainly shape the future," Time said.

The only precedent for such a choice by the magazine was its selection of Winston Churchill as Man of the Half-Century in 1949.

"This year, as world attention ricocheted from the stirrings of democracy in the USSR to the massacre in Beijing and the peaceful revolts in Eastern Europe, it became clear that we were witnessing a sequence of events that began well before 1989 and whose impact would extend into the next decade, perhaps the next century," the magazine said.

"Somehow confining our choice to 1989 seemed inadequate, and thus we named Gorbachev Man of the Decade."

The magazine said he "has accelerated history, making possible the end of one of its most disreputable episodes, the imposition of a cruel and unnatural order on hundreds of millions of people."

By The New York Times

MOSCOW — President Mikhail Gorbachev yesterday lashed out at separatists seeking to secede from the Soviet Union, warning that any such move in the country's current difficult political and economic conditions would "sow discord, bloodshed and death."

In an impromptu and agitated speech before the Congress of People's Deputies, Gorbachev sharply raised the indignation and volume he has used to rebuke nationalists around the country, particularly in the Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

"I am committed to the Leninist concept of the right of nations to self-determination that underlies the formation of the union," Gorbachev said, jabbing angrily as he spoke, his voice shaking with emotion.

"But I am convinced that nowadays, to exercise self-determination through secession, is to blow apart the union, to pit people against one another, and to sow discord, bloodshed and death."

"This is precisely the goal of the secessionists who exist in all republics," he said.

Gorbachev's denunciation of nationalists comes as the Soviet leadership is facing a whirlwind of events in Eastern Europe and domestically that some think are fundamentally changing the balance of power in the region.

While Gorbachev has supported moves by Eastern bloc allies to determine their own political and social structures, he has resisted similar moves by independent-minded republics within the Soviet Union.

Earlier this week, the Soviet leader upbraided Communist Party officials in Lithuania for leading their members in a vote to defy the Kremlin by separating from the leadership in Moscow, the first time in Soviet history that a local party organization has declared its independence.

At the Lithuanian party congress, the Communist chief raised the possibility of the republic's secession from the Soviet Union.

Communist Party leaders in Moscow were so alarmed by the events in Lithuania that they decided to call a special session of the party's Central Committee in the next few days to discuss the issue.

Gorbachev's remarks were made amid a heated debate in the congress about the formation of a constitutional compliance committee, to insure that national and republic laws agree with the Soviet Constitution.